

Staff Report

Report To: Operations Committee
Report From: Heidi Jennen, Supervisor of Environmental Services
Meeting Date: April 17, 2025
Report Code: OP-25-018
Subject: Circular Materials Eligible Community Recycling Calendars Agreements

Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report OP-25-018 respecting Circular Materials Eligible Community Recycling Calendars Agreements, the Operations Committee recommends that City Council:

1. Direct staff to bring forward a by-law to authorize the Mayor and Clerk to execute an Agreement for Eligible Communities with Circular Materials for 2026, as outlined in the report; and
2. Direct staff to bring forward a by-law to authorize the Mayor and Clerk to execute an Amending Agreement for Eligible Communities with Circular Materials for the remainder of 2025 as outlined in the report.

Highlights:

- Circular Materials is offering municipalities an Agreement to continue promoting recycling collection through their waste calendar and the website until December 31, 2026. The City will receive \$0.35 per household to support the creation and distribution of the waste calendar.
- The City will launch the Recycling Coach 'What Goes Where' tool on the Waste Management and Green Bin webpages, as well as through an app, in May as part of the Green Bin program. This

interactive platform will provide residents with clear, easy-to-follow guidance on waste disposal, covering green bin materials, garbage, hazardous waste, recycling, and yard waste.

- As part of its agreement with Circular Materials, the City will receive an additional \$0.15 per household for integrating recycling information into the Recycling Coach app, which helps offset implementation costs and enhances waste diversion efforts.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

[Strategic Plan](#) Priority: Green City by promoting waste diversion through the new green bin program and introducing innovative tools like the Recycling Coach app as part of the City's ongoing efforts to reduce our environmental footprint.

Climate and Environmental Implications:

This supports the objectives of the City's Corporate Climate Change Adaptation Plan by considering climate adaptation in the development of the City's strategies, plans and policies.

Previous Report/Authority:

[OP-23-025 Agreement for Eligible Community Promotion and Education](#)

Background:

The City currently has an agreement with Circular Materials to promote recycling collection through the waste calendar and the City's website. As part of this agreement, the City also provides residents with information about Circular Materials, including how to access their website for recycling guidelines.

As part of the City's efforts to enhance waste diversion and public education, the Recycling Coach app will be introduced to City residents in May, coinciding with the launch of the Green Bin program. Recycling Coach provides an interactive platform that offers residents clear and accessible information on waste management. This platform will also be available online through the Waste Management and Green Bin web pages. Key features of the app include:

What goes where: Residents can search for specific items to find detailed instructions on how to dispose of them properly. This includes guidance on green bin materials, garbage, hazardous waste, and yard waste.

Image Recognition Technology: Users can take a picture of an item, and the app will identify it and recommend appropriate disposal options.

Reuse and Donation Suggestions: For items in good condition, the app may suggest donating them to local organizations or participating in community reuse events, such as Goods Exchange Day.

Circular Materials selected Recycle Coach as their official app through an RFP process. This app will provide residents with up-to-date information on what is recyclable under their program. Since the City is implementing the Recycle Coach app, Circular Materials will compensate the City an additional \$0.15 per household for the remainder of this year and all of 2026. This funding will help offset the costs associated with implementing the app and conducting public education efforts.

Analysis:

Circular Materials recognizes that residents prefer to have all waste-related information in one place and has offered municipalities an Agreement to continue promoting recycling collection through their waste calendar and the website from January 1, 2026, to December 31, 2026. This agreement extends the City's current Agreement with Circular Materials during the transition period, which is set to end on December 31, 2025.

Under the 2026 agreement for eligible community recycling calendars, the City will receive \$0.35 per household to support the design, printing, and distribution of waste calendars. In addition, the City will receive an extra \$0.15 per household, provided Circular Materials is given a list of addresses and waste collection dates in Excel format. This data, which can be extracted from the City's GIS system, will be utilized in the Recycle Coach app to assist residents in locating their recycling collection schedules. No confidential information will be shared.

To qualify for the additional \$0.15 per household, an amending agreement for 2025 will be required, with the funding prorated accordingly.

Financial Implications:

The City will receive \$0.35 per eligible source to help offset the costs of designing, developing, printing, and distributing waste calendars for 2026. With approximately 9,630 eligible sources in the City, this will result in a payment of \$3,370.50 for 2026.

The City will also receive an extra \$0.15 per household for the integration into Recycle Coach, totalling \$1,445 for 2026. Upon signing the amending agreement, the City will also receive a one-time, prorated payment of approximately \$722.50 for 2025.

Communication Strategy:

The Circular Material website for Owen Sound can be found at [Owen Sound | Circular Materials](#).

The introduction of the Recycling Coach app will be featured on the City's Waste Management [webpage](#) and the Green Bin [webpage](#) and will also be promoted through social media posts.

Consultation:

None.

Attachments:

None.

Recommended by:

Heidi Jennen, Supervisor of Environmental Services

Lara Widdifield, Director of Public Works and Engineering

Submission approved by:

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Heidi Jennen, Supervisor of Environmental Services, at hjennen@owensound.ca or 519-376-4440 Ext 3223.